

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----129372 071522Z /45

O 071357Z SEP 77

FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1153

INFO USMISSION NATO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 THE HAGUE 4546

EXDIS

DEPT PASS SECDEF AND USMNR SHAPE FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR MNUC NPG NATO NL

SUBJECT: CONSULTATIONS ON ENHANCED RADIATION/REDUCED BLAST
WEAPONS

REF: USNATO 5628

1. WE SHARE USNATO'S EVALUATION THAT GON WANTS TO GIVE US
ITS CONSIDERED VIEWS AND BE IN POSITION TO TELL DUTCH

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PARLIAMENT THAT THIS HAS BEEN DONE.

2. AS OUR EARLIER REPORTING HAS INDICATED, THE RB WEAPON,
POPULARLY REFERRED TO HERE ONLY AS "NUETRON BOMB," HAS
CREATED A STIR IN THIS COUNTRY ALMOST AS LARGE AS IN THE
FRG. THE ISSUE HAS CAUGHT THE FANCY OF THE INTELLECTUAL
COMMUNITY, A NUMBER OF WHOM HAVE HASTENED INTO PRINT ON

THE MATTER. WHILE SOME OF THE COMMENTARY HAS POINTED OUT ADVANTAGES OF THE PRODUCTION AND DEPLOYMENT, A SUBSTANTIAL AMOUNT OF OPINION HAS BEEN NEGATIVE, SOME OF IT STRONGLY SO. FURTHER, THE EMPHASIS OF MUCH OF THE DISCUSSION HAS BEEN ON THE PSYCHOLOGICAL ELEMENTS OF THE ISSUE, OCCASIONALLY AT THE EXPENSE OF REASON AND FACT. THE DEAN OF PUNDITS ON INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, HELDRING, WHO HEADS THE NETHERLANDS INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, AND FORMER MFA NATO DIRECTOR VAN EEKELLEN--NOW A LIBERAL MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT--HAVE WEIGHED IN WITH ARGUMENTS ON THE WHOLE FAVORABLE TO PRODUCTION AND DEPLOYMENT. BY CONTRAST, THE SUPERINTENDENT OF THE DUTCH MILITARY ACADEMY, PACIFICIST GEN. VON MEJENFELDT, AND THE HEAD OF GOVERNMENT-FUNDED NETHERLANDS PEACE INSTITUTE, NEUMAN, HAVE COME OUT STRONGLY AGAINST, THE LATTER IN AN OFFICIAL INSTITUTE PUBLICATION CHARACTERIZED BY SHODDY HOMEWORK AND SLOPPY THINKING. FOREIGN COMMENTATORS SUCH AS LORD CHALFONT ("THE TIMES", JULY 25) AS WELL AS COMMENTARY FROM THE US HAVE ALSO NOT GONE UNNOTICED. BESIDES THE DUTCH COMMUNIST PARTY, WHICH HAS WAGED A RATHER PREDICTABLE MINI-CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE RB WEAPON, CHURCH GROUPS HAVE JUMPED ON THE ANTI-RB WEAPON BAND-WAGON. NOT SURPRISINGLY, THE LABOR PARTY EXECUTIVE HAS NOW ALSO COME OUT AGAINST THE RB WEAPON.

3. IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES, THE RESPONSIBLE MINISTERS IN THE CURRENT CARETAKER GOVERNMENT HAVE FELT BOXED-IN. SO FAR
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THEY ARE ON RECORD--IN WRITTEN ANSWERS TO PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS--ONLY TO THE EFFECT THAT SUFFICIENT DATA ARE NOT YET AVAILABLE TO GIVE A BALANCED JUDGMENT ABOUT THE SIGNIFICANCE AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE RB WEAPON AND THAT A DEFINITIVE JUDGMENT WILL BE POSSIBLE ONLY AFTER FURTHER DATA AND INSIGHT HAVE BEEN OBTAINED, ALSO IN THE COURSE OF ALLIANCE CONSULTATIONS. PARTICULARLY ON THE PART OF DEFENSE MINISTER STEMERDINK, THE FEELING OF BEING BOXED-IN INCREASED WHEN DUTCH MEDIA REPORTED COMMENTS BY SACEUR, AS WELL AS SYG LUNS AT REYKJAVIK, AS STRONGLY SUPPORTING PRODUCTION AND DEPLOYMENT. STEMERDINK IS SAID TO HAVE BEEN ANNOYED THAT LEADING STATEMENTS BY NATO OFFICIALS TENDED TO PREJUDGE THE ISSUE AND LEAVE LITTLE ROOM FOR CONSIDERED JUDGMENT AND FREE DECISION BY POLITICAL LEADERS. WE HAVE ALSO HEARD COMMENT AT THE WORKING LEVEL IN THE MFA TO THE EFFECT THAT STEMERDINK IS SOMEWHAT UNHAPPY THAT NPG DISCUSSIONS ABOUT THE RB WEAPON HAD BEEN TOO "INCIDENTAL" AND HENCE NOT FULLY FOCUSED ATTENTION ON WHAT HAS NOW TURNED OUT TO BE SUCH AN EXPLOSIVE ISSUE.

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED ABOVE ADDRESSEES.

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----129537 071527Z /45

O 071357Z SEP 77
FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1154
INFO USMISSION NATO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY LISBON
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AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
AMEMBASSY ROME

S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 THE HAGUE 4546

EXDIS

DEPT PASS SECDEF AND USMNR SHAPE FOR POLAD

4. ALL THIS HAS ADDED UP TO A SITUATION IN WHICH FOREIGN
MINISTER VAN DER STOEL, PRODDER BY DEF MIN STEMERDINK,
DECIDED TO WEIGH IN WITH DUTCH VIEWS NOT MERELY WITH RESPECT
TO DEPLOYMENT BUT ALSO WITH RESPECT TO PRODUCTION OF THE RB
WEAPON. THE MINISTERS HAVE CHOSEN THIS TACK IN THE HOPE OF
(A) OBTAINING FURTHER INFORMATION ON WHICH TO BASE A CONSIDERED
GON JUDGMENT ABOUT THE DESIRABILITY OF THE RB WEAPON, (B)
ATTEMPTING TO REACH SOME SORT OF GON POSITION WITH RESPECT
TO THE RB WEAPONS ON THE BASIS OF INFORMATION OBTAINED IN
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CONSULTATION WITH ALLIES (READ US), AND (C) DEALING WITH WHAT NOW APPEARS TO BE THE MOUNTING POPULAR OPPOSITION TO THE RB WEAPONS. THE PARLIAMENTARY LABOR PARTY HAS ALREADY ASKED FOR A FULL-DRESS HEARING ON THE RB WEAPON AND THERE HAVE EVEN BEEN SUGGESTIONS THAT SACEUR AND SYG LUNS BE ASKED AS WITNESSES. NO DATE HAS AS YET BEEN SET. THE GOVERNMENT, HOWEVER, HAS NOW PUT ITSELF IN A POSITION WHERE IT MUST TAKE A STANCE AND TO SHOW AT THE SAME TIME THAT IT HAS MADE AN ACTIVE INPUT INTO THE DECISION WHETHER TO PRODUCE AND DEPLOY THE RB WEAPON.

5. COMMENT: WE AGREE THAT IT WOULD SEEM TO BE TO OUR ADVANTAGE TO AGREE WITH THE DUTCH PROCEDURE SUGGESTED FOR HANDLING THE NATO CONSULTATIONS.
MCCLOSKEY

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED ABOVE ADDRESSEES.

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